(a) whether Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is also looking into activities like film shooting misuse of protected sites, holding functions/parties near sites under Archaeological Survey of India purview;

(b) if so, whether the existing rules are adequate in respect of keeping strict vigilance upon visitors, who deface monuments in any way, as generally each such protected monument has tell-tale signs of such defacements;

(c) whether it is due to indifferent attitude of the ASI staff, or their connivance; and

(d) the details of steps being taken to achieve zero-tolerance for such undesirable acts?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Grant of permissions for filming operations and holding of cultural events/functions within the limits of centrally protected monuments are considered by the Archaeological Survey of India under the provisions of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites & Remains Act, 1958, Rules, 1959, and guidelines.

(b) to (d) The staff posted at the monuments/sites declared as of national importance maintain vigilance to detect acts of defacement and vandalism in the monuments. In addition to the regular watch and ward staff, private security guards, State police and CISF have also been deployed for the safety and security of selected monuments. Penalty clauses exist in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act in which such acts are punishable by imprisonment of 3 months or with a fine of Rs.5000/- or both.

Memorial of Late Shri Morarjibhai Desai

1589. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of India has received a proposal from the State Government of Gujarat for acquiring the land from Sabarmati Ashram Gaushala Trust, Ahmedabad, as the possession of the land is with CPWD, to develop suitable memorial on the Samadhi of late Shri Morarjibhai Desai;

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government of India on the proposal of Government of Gujarat; and

(c) the present status of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The land for the Memorial was given by the Sabarmati Ashram Gaushala Trust, Ahmedabad without any cost. A memorial of Shri Morarji Desai named 'Abhay Ghat' has been constructed at the bank of river Sabarmati. The construction work started in July, 1997 and was completed in March, 1999. The memorial is being maintained by CPWD. As such there is no question of acquiring the land on payment of its cost, at this stage. The Government of Gujarat has been informed accordingly.

As there is no scheme under which this could be considered at this late stage, it is not possible to acquire the land on payment of the cost of the land.